

Glossary



- aboriginal:** pertaining to the aborigines; primitive, native.
- alien:** a person born in and owing allegiance to a country other than the one in which he lives.
- ancestor:** a person from who others are descended: forefather.
- button hook:** a small, usually metal hook for pulling buttons through buttonholes, as on gloves, shoes etc. Instruments used by U.S. Public Health Service doctors at Ellis Island to overturn immigrants' eyelids to check for Trachoma, a highly contagious and incurable eye disease.
- census:** an official enumeration (count) of the population with details as to age, gender, occupation.
- deportation:** the lawful expulsion of an undesired alien or other person from a state.
- detained:** to keep from proceeding, delay, to keep under custody.
- emigrant:** a person who leaves his native country.
- excluded:** to shut out; prevent entrance of.
- Ellis Island:** an island in upper NY Bay: a former immigration examination station.
- famine:** extreme and general scarcity or lack of food; starvation.
- genealogy:** the chart or recorded history of the descent of a person or family from an ancestor. The study of one's history.
- immigrant:** a person who migrates to a country for permanent residence.
- indentured Servant:** a person who came to America and was placed under a contract to work for another over a period of time, usually seven years.

Glossary

Continued

- Industrial Revolution:** the complex of social and economic changes resulting from the mechanization of productive processes that began in England about 1760.
- inspector:** an officer appointed to carefully look over and examine immigrants.
- interpreter:** one who has the ability to translate into a particular language.
- manifest:** a list of cargo or passengers carried on a vessel or airplane.
- naturalization:** process of becoming a citizen and being given all of the rights and privileges that go with it.
- persecution:** a program to exterminate, drive away, or control a people because of their religious, ethical, or moral beliefs or practices.
- Port of Entry:** any place where incoming passengers and cargo are allowed to enter a country.
- public charge:** a person whom is in economic distress and is supported by government expense.
- quarantine:** a strict isolation imposed to prevent the spread of disease.
- quarantine flag:** a yellow flag designating the letter “Q” in the International Code of Signals, flown by itself to signify that a vessel has no disease on board and requests permission to use a port.
- quota:** the number of persons permitted to immigrate to a country.
- steamship:** a large commercial power vessel driven by steam.
- steerage:** part of a ship formerly containing the steering apparatus; accommodations allotted to passengers who have booked passage at the cheapest rate.
- trachoma:** a contagious inflammation of the conjunctiva and cornea of the eye causing scarring and blindness; called the immigrants’ disease.